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A week after dozens of illegal immigrants were arrested using fraudulent ID badges to access high-security areas of O'Hare Airport, Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Ill.) on Tuesday proposed legislation to require workers in all U.S. airports' secure areas to be citizens.

"It's designed to specifically address problems that we found at O'Hare in particular but that seem to be symptomatic of problems that we see at other major airports," Kirk said after a hearing on O'Hare security lapses convened with Rep. Melissa Bean (D-Ill.).

"You would hope then we are fully linked to the full identity of the person with a valid, real Social Security number," Kirk said. "I am not particularly focused on this to enforce the immigration laws of the U.S. I'm focused on this because it's the best way that I know to ensure that we know who's working at the airfields."

Secure areas at O'Hare are accessed with ID badges issued by the city's Aviation Department. The 33 workers arrested last week allegedly used fake or expired badges.

Bean and Kirk said the frequent practice is made easier by the lack of thorough vehicle inspections at a back gate used by many O'Hare workers.

Ken Fletcher of the Transportation Security Administration said all O'Hare workers have been issued new ID badges, a job the city completed in September. Seven months earlier, 3,800 badges reportedly had been unaccounted for.